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GUKESH DRAWS WITH WHITE IN GAME 13

SINGAPORE: Indian GM D Gukesh tried his best but could not overcome a resilient Ding Liren of China and had to settle for a draw after 68 moves in the 13th and penultimate game of the World Chess Championship. With the scores tied at 6.5-6.5 and one classical game to go, it will be crucial for Gukesh to hold on with black pieces on Thursday | P15

Rahul's pitch to Birla to make LS fully functional

Urges Speaker to expunge BJP's derogatory remarks; wants discussion on Constitution

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

AMID continuing political showdown over Congress' alleged links to US investor George Soros, Leader of the Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi met Speaker Om Birla on Wednesday and urged him to expunge remarks made by BJP MPs against him, and ensure the smooth functioning of Parliament.

"I had a meeting with the Speaker and I told him that our party is saying that derogatory comments against me should be expunged. The Speaker said he will look into it. We want the House to function," he said.

Rahul accused the BJP of running away from discussion on the Adani issue, adding he would not be provoked by any of its charges.

With the Opposition protesting outside Parliament demanding a discussion on the US indictment of the Adani group, the treasury benches stepped up their counter attack on the Congress' alleged links to Soros inside the House.

Rahul said the Congress wants a discussion on the Constitution in the Lok Sabha starting December 13, adding his party will ensure the House functions properly despite provocation, even though it is not their responsibility.

He said BJP MPs can speak against "me on whatever issue, but the debate on the Constitution should happen".

On Tuesday, Congress Deputy Leader in Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi wrote to the Speaker, urging him to examine the party's complaint against BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's defamatory remarks against Rahul Gandhi and remove them from the record. Gogoi said after the Speaker announces his decision, the Congress would be keen to participate in the legislative business in Parliament.

GANDHIGIRI TO PUT BJP ON THE MAT

Rahul Gandhi and his party's MPs were joined by some other INDIA bloc MPs outside Parliament in greeting BJP members with placards and the national flag, as they urged them to allow the LS to function

RAJNATH SIDESTEPS

Rahul Gandhi also met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and sought to present him the flag but the veteran leader moved on after exchanging pleasantries

HC judge faces impeach bid

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

A day after the Supreme Court asked the Allahabad High Court to furnish details of the controversial speech delivered by Justice Shekhar Yadav at a VHP event, Opposition MPs in the Rajya Sabha on Wednesday started the process to move an impeachment motion against the HC judge.

According to sources, more than 40 INDIA bloc MPs have signed the petition initiated by Rajya Sabha MP and senior lawyer Kapil Sibal. The motion is likely to be submitted on Thursday, said an opposition MP.

The signatories include Congress MPs Digvijaya Singh, Vivek Tankha, Renuka Chowdhury, AAP's Sanjay Singh, TMC's Saket Gokhale and Sagarika Ghose, RJD's Manoj Jha, SP's Javed Ali Khan, CPI(M)'s John Brittas, A A Rahim, and CPI's Sandosh Kumar and P P Suneer.

The notice said that by making divisive and prejudiced statements, Justice Yadav eroded public confidence in the judiciary. "His statements, which have been widely documented and reported, encouraged animosity and division among different religious and communal groups," it said.

The notice further said: "The remarks are in blatant violation of the Restatement of Values of Judicial Life, adopted by the Supreme Court in 1997, which mandates judges to maintain impartiality, equality, and restraint, both in their judgments and conduct outside court."

50 RS MPs need to sign the motion

The motion will be moved under Section 3 (1) (8) of the Judges (Inquiry) Act. A complaint against a judge has to be made through a resolution signed by 100 members if moved in the Lok Sabha and 50 MPs if it's in the Rajya Sabha

TEARFUL ADIEU

The mortal remains of former CM SM Krishna were consigned to flames with full state honours at his native village of Somanahalli near Maddur in Mandya district on Wednesday evening. The veteran politician passed away early Tuesday | UDAYASHANKAR S MORE ON: P4

Is Aero India venue a notified reserve forest patch?

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

WITH just about two months to go for the much-awaited biennial Aero India, Air Force Station Yelahanka — where the country's premier air show takes place from February 10-14 — is on the radar of the state government, the forest department in particular. The forest department has raised the red flag saying the land where Aero India is held is a part of a 159.28-acre reserve forest patch in Survey Number 49, in Gantiganahalli forest block in Bengaluru North taluk, and has sought land in its lieu elsewhere in the city.

According to the October 1, 1931, gazette notification and government order, the land is a reserve forest patch, and there is no indication of it being denotified. The Karnataka government has been hosting Aero India at the location since 1996.

The issue came to the fore at the December 3, 2024, Civil Military Liaison meeting, chaired by Chief Secretary Shalini Rajneesh. At the meeting, the forest department suggested to the defence establishments to file an application on the Parivesh portal asking for the land and giving land to the forest department in lieu of it, elsewhere in the city.

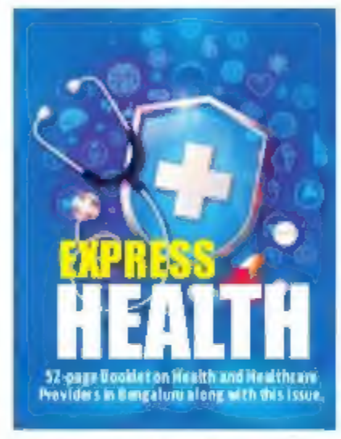
A senior forest department official told *TNIE*: "The land used by the Indian Air Force is a part of the reserve forest patch and it has not been denotified. However, it has lost all its characteristic of being a forest and has no green/tree cover after 2012."

The official said neither the forest department nor the revenue department has any document stating that the land was handed over to the defence establishments. CONTINUED ON P4

EXPRESS READ

Sanjay Malhotra takes charge as RBI Governor

Mumbai: After taking charge as RBI Governor on Wednesday, Sanjay Malhotra said ensuring growth is a 'huge responsibility' and that decisions will be made with public interest in mind | P13



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